
U.S. Department of Justice



United States Attorney's Office Eastern District of Virginia

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U.S. Army Sergeant Pleads Guilty in Child Predator Case

(Alexandria, VA) - Sgt. Joseph J. Wunderler, age 29, of Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, pleaded guilty today to a one count criminal information charging him with attempted enticement to engage in sexual conduct with a minor in violation of Federal law. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced the pleading after Wunderler's appearance before United States District Court Judge Gerald Bruce Lee. Sentencing has been set for July 28, 2006.

According to court documents, between July 29, 2005, and August 19, 2005, Wunderler engaged in numerous sexually oriented chat sessions on the Internet with a person he believed to be a fourteen year-old girl. On August 19, 2005, Wunderler drove to a residence in Herndon, Virginia, where he arranged to meet the girl for a sexual encounter. At the residence, Wunderler was met by a reporter for the television program *Dateline NBC* who recorded an interview with the sergeant. The interview appeared on national television on November 4, 2005.

In announcing the plea, U.S. Attorney Chuck Rosenberg stated: "Parents and guardians need to know - and this is yet another reminder - that dangerous predators prowl on the Internet and prey on our children. We will continue to work closely with our Federal, state, and local law enforcement partners in the region to safeguard our children from dangerous Internet predators."

The case was investigated by Special Agent Fines E. Kiper, U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division. Assistant United States Attorneys Gerald J. Smagala and Edmund P. Power prosecuted the case for the United States.

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